

Debenham flood risk management project

Project update 3, autumn 2015

Background

Debenham is in the headwaters of the River Deben and a number of tributaries meet in the village. There are no raised defences through the village which has experienced flooding on a number of occasions. The most notable recent event was in 1993 when approximately 33 properties were recorded as having been flooded, but there have been a number of other events recorded between 1912 and the present day. Residents have suffered as a result, property and roads have been damaged and highway routes have been closed. As a result the Suffolk Flood Risk Management Partnership is exploring flood risk management options for the village.

Ways of reducing flood risk

In April we held a meeting in Debenham community centre which was attended by 23 landowners and interested parties from Aspall and Debenham. We discussed the “Natural Flood Management” ideas we are considering upstream of Debenham to reduce flood risk, reduce silt & phosphates in the watercourses and create wildlife habitats.

We followed this meeting with 1 to 1 meetings with 7 landowners who expressed an interest in the project, to discuss features that may be suitable on their land and sources of help and funding to deliver the necessary works. The features discussed ranged in size and form, from small ponds to larger in-channel structures and ponds.



Site of potential flood storage feature

As a result of these discussions with landowners we incorporated the “Natural Flood Management” features in the hydraulic model to ascertain the flood risk benefits they could provide, as well as ensuring they won’t have any adverse flood risk impacts elsewhere. The results from this are positive, demonstrating that multiple features storing water upstream of the village have the potential to provide significant benefits. We are in the process of discussing these results with the relevant landowners.

We are also investigating the benefit larger flood storage features could provide, such as storing flood flows on the Gulls and in the Derry Brook ford on Stony Lane. The embankments along the ford are high, therefore potentially offering space for storing flood water. We are investigating this idea as part of the hydraulic modelling being carried out this autumn to understand the impact storing water here could have on flood depths, and the duration the ford could be impassable.

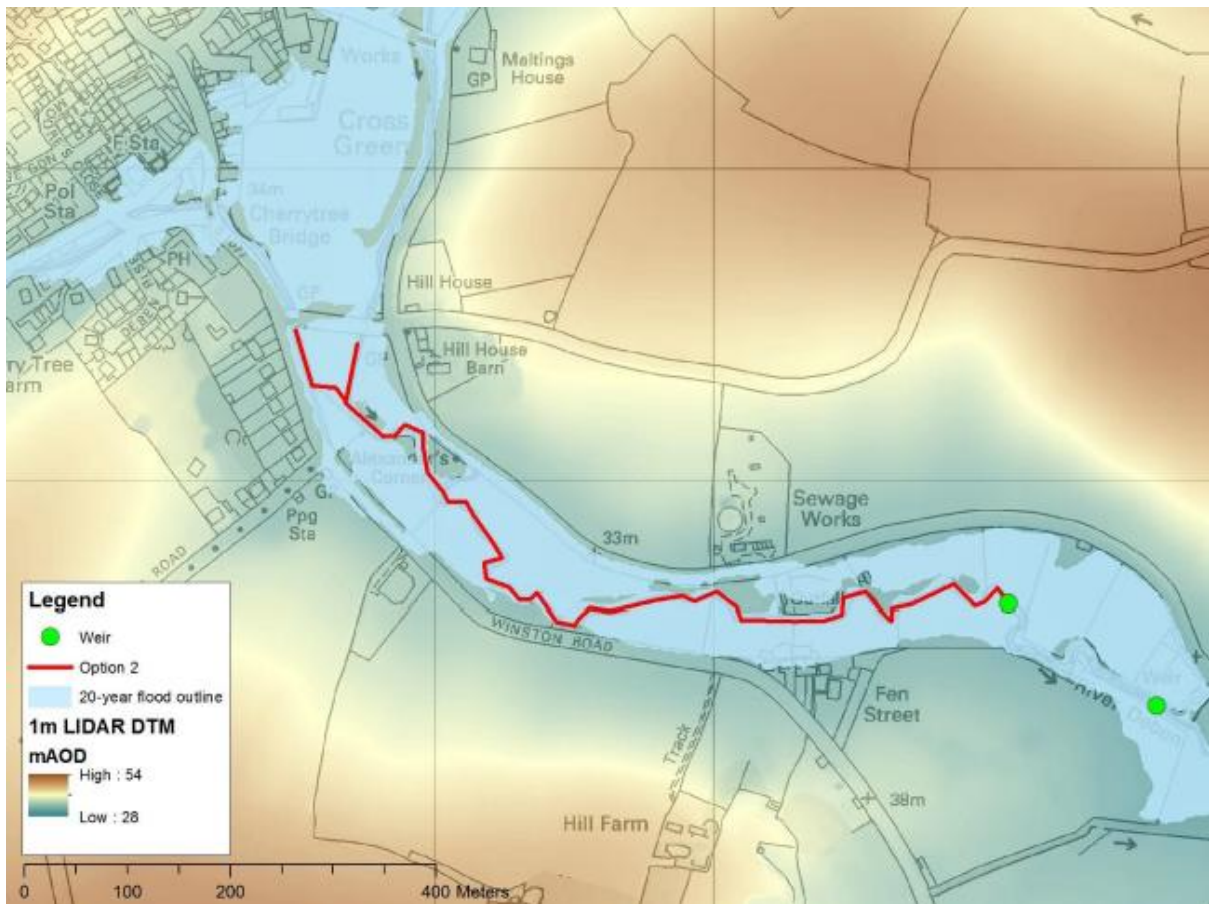


Derry Brook ford at Stony Lane. Note the high banks

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Two stage channel

We have investigated further the concept of creating a two stage channel downstream of the village. The width of the extended channel could potentially be less than originally thought, however a large part of the cost would still be the disposal of excavated material. A number of local farmers have expressed an interest in potentially using some of the soil. Local support such as this will therefore be very important to this project.



Location of potential two stage channel works

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Flood modelling

The updated flood mapping information produced earlier in the year has been updated on the Gov.UK website, as well as being made available to Mid Suffolk District Council to help inform planning decisions.

Next steps

We will continue to speak to the landowners regarding the results of the hydraulic modelling of the Natural Flood Management features, and will investigate the flood risk benefit of larger storage features on the Gulls and Derry Brook this autumn. We hope to obtain wider public input on the project next spring/summer.

How do I get further information?

For more information or to discuss the project, please contact:

Will Todd, Environment Agency william.todd@environment-agency.gov.uk

Jane Burch, Suffolk County Council jane.burch@suffolk.gov.uk
or view www.greensuffolk.org/hwmp